

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 IO-14 EUR-12 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
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R 021414Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8305
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY RABAT

UNCLAS ALGIERS 1046

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MOPS, SOPN, AG, MO, MA, SS
SUBJECT: ALGERIAN SAHARA COVERAGE

1. IN MARCH 28 EDITIONS BOTH ALGIERS FRENCH DAILY "EL MOUDJAHID" AND ARABIC "ASH-SHA'B" CARRIED ARTICLES WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST TO ADDEES. FRENCH LANGUAGE PAPER CARRIED STORY STATING ON MARCH 22 M'BAREK BRAHIM SALEK, MAURITANIAN VICE CONSUL IN LAS PALMAS AND FORMER SECOND SECRETARY IN DAKAR, HAD DEFECTED TO THE RANKS OF THE POLARISARIO. WHEN ASKED HIS MOTIVES, SALEK STATED THAT HE WAS "A SAHRAOUI FROM VILLA CISNEROS" AND THAT HE WAS DISTURBED AT JOINT MOROCCAN, MAURITANIAN AND SPANISH POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION IN THE CANARY ISLANDS.

2. IN COMPANION ARTICLE, "EL MOUDJAHID" QUOTED AFP NOUAKCHOTT THAT IN WAKE OF SAHARAN ATTACK AGAINST ZOUERATE RAILWAY TRAIN APPROXIMATELY 15 TRAIN CONDUCTORS WALKED OFF THE JOB, AND ARABIC LANGUAGE "ASH-SHA'B" CARRIED EDITORIAL "OULD DADDAH AT THE LAST STATION." "ASH-SHA'B" COMMENTED THAT THE RECENT ATTACK HAD GREATER MORAL AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS THAN MATERIAL OR MILITARY. NEWS-
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PAPER STATED THAT RECENT POLISARIO TACTICS OF HITTING MOROCCAN FORCES VICE MAURITANIAN HAD LUDDDED MAURITANIA INTO A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY AND A DANGEROUS RELIANCE ON FRENCH PROTECTION.

3. "ASH-SHA'B" ALSO COMMENTED ON MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN RELATIONS. EACH TIME MAURITANIA IS ATTACKED, PAPER SAID,

IT CAUSES MOROCCO TO PANIC AND SEND ADDITIONAL FORCES
TO MAURITANIA UNDER THE GUISE OF SOLIDARITY AND BROTHER-
HOOD, BUT IN REALITY MOROCCO IS EXPANDING ITS POLITICAL
INFLUENCE OVER MAURITANIA. PAPER QUOTED ISTIQLAL PARTY
MEMBER AS STATING THAT MOROCCAN BORDERS HISTORICALLY
INCLUDE MAURITANIA. EDITORIAL CONCLUDED BY WONDERING
WHETHER OULD DADDAH "WILL REACH THE LAST STATION" BEFORE
IT IS TOO LATE AND WITHDRAW HIS FORCES FROM THE SAHARA
AND MOROCCAN FORCES FROM HIS OWN COUNTRY SO THAT A
SAHRAOUI BUFFER STATE COULD BE SET UP BETWEEN HIS BORDERS
AND THE GREEDY CLAIMS OF MOROCCO TO THE NORTH.HAYNES

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